

An update from the UK Cystic Fibrosis and Exercise Network

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Objectives

The UK Cystic Fibrosis (CF) and Exercise Network have hosted annual meetings since 2016 to provide a peer support system and facilitate sharing of best practice. The network has tracked and highlighted discrepancies in exercise provision and the roles and responsibilities of clinical staff within UK CF care. Results from the 4th annual network meeting survey are provided.

Methods

46 delegates attended, representing 28 European institutions (NHS = 20, University = 5, Charity = 2, Other = 1). Delegates completed a survey, providing quantitative and qualitative data relating to clinical practice and meeting evaluation.

Results

All 2019 respondents reported that the meeting will inform future practice, citing the opportunity to network and share best practice as key features. The individuals primarily responsible for exercise testing and prescription in each centre have been reported annually between 2016-2019, with a physiotherapist being reported as responsible in 75%, 79%, 48% and 50% of centres, and an exercise 'technician' in 25%, 16%, 30% and 43% of centres respectively. 2019 respondents reported discussing exercise with patients at every (64%) or at least every other (16%) clinical visit, which is comparable to previous meetings. 72% of respondents reported feeling 'confident' in discussing exercise, however 96% felt that further training, qualifications and guidance would be beneficial, with 100% also wanting to attend future meetings. A workshop discussing accreditation for exercise professionals working in CF was reported as 'useful' by 88% of respondents.

Conclusion

The network has documented an increase in exercise technicians working in CF, with increasing responsibility in the provision of exercise. The annual meetings facilitate sharing of best practice, with a desire for future events to focus on practical approaches to exercise prescription, sharing of case studies, pursuit of accreditation and standardisation of exercise technician roles.